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The findings indicated that the coaches identified two key factors which initiated their entry into formal coach education: (a) desire to develop their coaching skills and (b) seeking professional certification. The most commonly attributed initiator was that of seeking professional certification. The findings also confirmed that all the coaches highlighted the dominant impact post-course experiential learning played in the overall development of their coaching competencies.

The findings support previous assertions that experiential learning plays a crucial contribution within the developmental journeys of coaches. The findings indicated that the extrinsic relevance that certification could lead to future employment opportunities formed a more common incentive for entering formal coach education, in contrast to the intrinsic relevance of developing personal coaching knowledge and skills.

The findings offer significant concerns for the future development of coach education programmes, suggesting if coaches do not perceive the course as an effective pathway to developing their coaching competencies the ultimate success of such educational programme could be compromised. Future research exploring the development of credible and truly holistic approaches to coach education must explore cultural constraints that surround coach's initiation into coach education programmes.

PC106

The professionalisation of sports coaching and the changing face of volunteerism

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This poster explores the changing landscape of professionalism in the field of sports coaching. It is articulated in response to the dearth of literature and empirical research, exploring processes of contemporary practice in the field. The persistent lack of awareness of practice *in situ* has created a professional context in which new meanings around discourses inhabiting the transitions towards professionalism are becoming increasingly rigid and inflexible, even though individual sports may have differing experiences. Policies projected by UK governmental bodies have exacerbated this situation through imposing reforms that have sought to homogenise coaching practice, in the process glossing over difference and flouting cultural diversity. Though volunteerism may be regarded as a socially embedded activity and one that is part of the United Kingdom's coaching tradition, there remains an ambition to transform coaching into professionalised activity, with bench-

marked standards, performance oriented pay, and systems of formal accreditation. With this agenda has evolved a series of treatments prescribing standardised solutions to otherwise unique and individualised professional challenges. Against this backdrop, the research adopts a more critical stance towards the professionalisation of sports coaching. It examines some of the tensions that are manifested in practice across different areas of sport and moves to understand differences emerging between contemporary reforms, situated practice, and coaching traditions. In the process, it also considers a range of external factors that have impacted upon and accelerated recent changes within coaching. It reflects upon the experiences of coaches at a time when a more unified approach to the planning and funding of coaching is high on the political agenda. Using the ethic guidelines of British Education Research Association (BERA), the research sought the views and the perceptions of key stakeholders operating at the levels of voluntary and community-based practice, drawing on data from 20 semi-structured interviews, gathered in particular contexts of sports coaching, located within the north-west of England.

The content of the interview was transcribed verbatim and coded via inductive theme generation. Themes that emerge from the interviews suggest that there is no shared notion of what professionalisation is and means, and that there is a fear that the machinery of professionalisation will disenfranchise individuals and directly challenge the very ethos that underpins the individual's voluntary involvement in their sport.

PC107

Using problem-based learning in biomechanics: Student's learning experiences and self-efficacy

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Problem-based learning (PBL) has been used for many years in medical education to foster motivation, develop problem solving abilities as well as encourage independent learning (Willis *et al.*, 2002: *Medical Teacher*, 24, 495–501). The use of a PBL teaching approach is also increasing across different subject areas in higher education. The advantages of PBL have been claimed by a number of previous authors (Dochy *et al.*, 2003: *Learning and Instruction*, 13, 533–568) and there is an expectation that PBL can enhance student's learning (Duncan & Al-Nakeeb, 2006: *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and, Tourism Education*, 5, 50–59). However, the use of PBL in sport and exercise science has received little qualitative or quantitative investigation. Conse-